



American Cancer Society
Cancer Action Network
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Date: January 27, 2016

To: Chairman Hune, Senate Insurance Committee and Committee Members

From: Andrew R Schepers, Director, Michigan Government Relations, ACS CAN

Re: Support for Oral Parity in Michigan

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for the opportunity today to voice our opinion in the need for cost parity for oral chemotherapy treatments in Michigan. The emergence of clinically safe and effective, orally administered anticancer medication has significantly increased the treatment options for cancer patients. One of the most significant barriers to their use is greater patient out-of-pocket costs for oral therapies versus patient out-of-pocket costs for intravenous (IV) medications.

Today, oral chemotherapies comprise about 10% of available chemotherapies and roughly 25% of the medications in the oncology development pipeline¹, indicating a growing role for oral chemotherapy in cancer treatment. Oral chemotherapy is often more convenient and can be taken at home, requiring less time off from work and less travel time to and from medical facilities.

Certain newer chemotherapies are available only in oral formulation, forcing patients to have to pay more for what their doctor feels is best for them or take a less effective therapy that is available in an intravenous form. The out-of-pocket cost disparity between IV and oral chemotherapy can lead to patients making treatment decisions based on cost and not on what their doctor has recommended.

As you can see the need for parity is great. We ask that you please support parity in Michigan and provide access to the drugs that cancer patients need. Thank you for your understanding and consideration.

¹ Andrews, Michelle. Some States Mandate Better Coverage of Oral Cancer Drugs. Kaiser Health News. May 14, 2012.
<http://www.kaiserhealthnews.org/features/insuring-your-health/2012/cancer-drugs-by-pill-instead-of-iv-michelle-andrews-051512.aspx>

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